



Friday, March 28, 2003

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## Honda opposes resolution to support war

Monday, March 24, 2003

By [Jon Leisel](#)

WASHINGTON D.C. - Gilroy's U.S. Representative Mike Honda was one of 11 lawmakers - including three from the Bay Area - who voted last Friday against a Congressional resolution showing support for U.S. troops because they said it contained rhetoric that endorsed President Bush's decision to go to war with Iraq.

Honda, D-San Jose, said he "wholeheartedly" backed American forces, but opposed the resolution because the House's Republican majority "decided to politicize the issue by drafting a resolution that included language in support of President Bush's misguided Iraq policy."

"While I fully support our troops, I vehemently disagree with the President's decision to abandon a diplomatic solution to disarming Saddam Hussein, and I cannot support a resolution that endorses that decision," Honda wrote in a statement on his Internet site.

The 392-11 House vote came early Friday morning after a sometimes angry and emotional debate. A particular bone of contention for opponents of the resolution was language "expressing unequivocal support ... to the President as Commander-in-Chief for his firm leadership and decisive action in the conduct of military operations in Iraq as part of the on-going Global War on Terrorism."

The Senate had voted 99-0 Thursday for a similar resolution, but with less effusive praise for the president.

"He was very upset and troubled he was put in that position, but he was not going to be coerced into supporting something he didn't believe in," Honda's spokesman Ruben Pulido Jr., said of the House language Friday. "That's why he voted against it."

Honda, who formerly represented South County on the Santa Clara County Board of

Super-visors, does not support the Bush administration's Iraq policy because he feels not all diplomatic and other options were explored, Pulido said.

"He really believes we need to work with the United Nations and have some kind of action the world community can support," Pulido said. "When it comes to the rebuilding of Iraq, it will take a lot of resources and other countries to get involved to ensure we create a peaceful situation in the Middle East."

"That's not going to happen wholly and successfully if it's just the countries involved in this attack that do it on their own."

But with the conflict already in progress, he hopes for quick closure that allows the troops to fulfill their mission and return safely with the least amount of casualties, Pulido said.

"Regardless of our personal views on the need for U.S.-led military intervention,

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I urge all Americans to support our troops, and to treat them with honor and respect upon their return," Honda said in a statement on his Internet site.

Honda was born in California but spent his early childhood with his family in an internment camp in Colorado during World War II. He served in the Peace Corps in the mid-1960s building schools and health clinics in El Salvador.

Other Californians joining Honda in opposition to Fridays' measure included Reps. Barbara Lee, D-Oakland, Fortney "Pete" Stark, D-Fremont, and Maxine Waters and Diane Watson of Los Angeles.

Twenty-two members also protested the resolution by voting "present."

The Associated Press contributed to this report.



Jon Jeisel covers the city of Gilroy for *The Dispatch*. You can reach him at [jonj@gilroydispatch.com](mailto:jonj@gilroydispatch.com).

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